

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



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#### **2012 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 63** **Fall Update # 53, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery** Districts Affected: Yukon Area

##### **Fall Season Assessment**

The cumulative fall chum salmon total run size based on inseason run reconstruction, is estimated to be greater than 1,000,000 fish. This is above the historical average run size of 700,000 fish for even-numbered years and near the odd-numbered year average. Also this estimated run size is within the preseason projection of 986,000 to 1,242,000 fish. The cumulative coho salmon passage by the Pilot Station sonar project through September 7, based on inseason run reconstruction, is approximately 168,000 fish, which is slightly below the historical median of 167,000 fish for that date. Timing of fish passage was estimated to be four days early for fall chum salmon and two days early for coho salmon.

##### ***Lower Yukon River Cooperative Drift Test Fishing*** – YDFDA, ADF&G

ADF&G ceased conducting test fish drifts on August 28. YDFDA continued the drift project through September 20.

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through September 20 was 2,022, which is above the historical median of 1,150 for that date. The cumulative CPUE through September 20 for coho salmon was 455, which is above the historical median of 382 for that date. Timing of fish passage for this project was four days early for fall chum salmon and two days late for coho salmon.

##### ***Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing*** - Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council and BSFA

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishery project ceased operations for the season on September 13. The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through September 13 is 1,106, which is below the historical median of 2,228 for that date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon through September 13 is 776, which is below the historical median of 1,104 for that date. Timing of fish

passage for this project was ten days early for fall chum salmon and five days late for coho salmon.

***Pilot Station Sonar Project*** - ADF&G

Pilot Station sonar project ceased operations for the season on September 7. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 7 is approximately 682,871 fish, which is above the median passage of 594,060 fish for that date. The cumulative coho salmon passage through September 7 is approximately 106,793 fish, which is below the median passage of 135,570 fish for that date. Timing of fish passage for this project was one day late for both fall chum and coho salmon.

***Rapids Test Fish Wheel Project*** - Zuray

Rapids Test Fish Wheel project ceased operations for the season on September 20. The cumulative fall chum salmon CPUE through September 20 is approximately 22, 711 fish, which is below the historical median of 24,675 fish for that date. The cumulative CPUE based on adjusted water level is above the historical median for that date. Timing of fish passage for this project was two days late for Rapids and seven days late for the adjusted for water levels version of assessment.

***Chandalar Sonar Project*** - USFWS

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 29 is approximately 196,507 fish, which is below the average passage. The current passage level has exceeded the upper end of the biological escapement goal of 74,000-152,000 fall chum salmon. Timing of fish passage for this project was one day early.

***Sheenjek Sonar Project*** - ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 24 is approximately 86,243 fish, which is above the average passage of 78,763 fish for that date. The current passage level has exceeded the lower end of the biological escapement goal (based on right bank operations) of 50,000-104,000 fall chum salmon. Timing of fish passage for this project was one day early.

***Eagle Sonar Project*** - ADF&G & DFO

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 30 is 132,517 fish, which is below the average passage of 151,552 fish for that date. Average cumulative passage, based on years of sonar operation, is 78% for this date. The current passage level has exceeded the upper end of the interim management escapement goal range of 70,000-104,000 fall chum salmon.

***Fishing Branch River Weir Project*** - DFO

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 30 is 15,166 fish, which is below the average passage of 21,547 fish for that date. Median timing for this project would suggest the run is nearly 80% through the weir. The second component of the run is expected to be arriving shortly.

### ***Tanana Test Fish Wheel Project - Moore***

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 24 is approximately 21,904 fish, which is above the average of 7,948 fish for that date. The cumulative coho salmon passage through September 24 is 7,668 fish, which is above the average of 1,875 fish for that date. Timing of fish passage for this project was three days early for both fall chum and coho salmon.

### ***Stock Identification***

Fall chum salmon genetic samples processed from July 19 through September 7 passage past Pilot Station sonar indicate that stocks represented approximately 20% summer, 32% Border U.S. (Chandalar/Sheenjek), 22% Canadian, and 26% Tanana.

### ***Fall Season Management***

In accordance with the Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, a total run ranging from 950,000 to 1 million fish is adequate for escapement needs, full subsistence opportunity, and has a surplus available for other uses. Subsistence fishing is open 7 days per week in all mainstem districts (Districts 1-5).

### ***Fall Commercial Salmon Fishing***

Through September 30, thirteen fall commercial fishing periods have been announced in District Y-1, eleven periods in District Y-2, eight periods in Subdistrict 4-A, eight periods in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, and nine periods in District 6. The commercial salmon fishing season in Districts Y-1 and Y-2 closed by regulation after September 10. Additional commercial fishing periods in the remaining districts and subdistricts will be dependent upon inseason run strength assessment and market interest.

#### **Preliminary harvest information for District Y-1:**

The cumulative harvest for Y-1 through September 10 is 139,261 fall chum and 39,672 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 71 fish.

#### **Preliminary harvest information for District Y-2:**

The cumulative harvest for Y-2 through September 10 is 128,289 fall chum and 29,042 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 34 fish.

#### **Preliminary harvest information for Subdistrict 4-A:**

Period #7: Subdistrict 4-A, 120 hours (6:00 p.m. September 18 until 6:00 p.m. September 23).  
0 fall chum, 0 coho.

Period #8: Subdistrict 4-A, 120 hours (6:00 p.m. September 25 until 6:00 p.m. September 30).  
0 fall chum, 0 coho.

The cumulative Subdistrict 4-A commercial harvest through September 24 is 811 fall chum salmon and the incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Preliminary harvest information for Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C:

Period #7: Subdistrict 5-B and 5-C, 120 hours (6:00 p.m. September 25 until 6:00 p.m. September 30). 0 fall chum, 0 coho.

Period #8: Subdistrict 5-B and 5-C, 120 hours (6:00 p.m. October 2 until 6:00 p.m. October 7).  
No harvest information available at this time.

The cumulative commercial harvest for Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C through September 30 is 1,384 fall chum salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 0.

Preliminary harvest information for District 6:

Period #7: District 6, 42 hours (6:00 p.m. September 21 until 12:00 noon September 23).  
301 fall chum/ 2,077lbs, 319 coho/1,595 lbs.

Period #8: District 6, 42 hours (6:00 p.m. September 24 until 12:00 noon September 26).  
5,575 fall chum/ 38,345 lbs, 2,761 coho/13,805 lbs.

The cumulative commercial harvest for District 6 through September 30 is 18,159 fall chum and 6,243 coho salmon.

***Subsistence Salmon Fishing***

Coastal District: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Districts 1, 2, 3: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

The Innoko River: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 4: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller. Use of drift gillnets to harvest fall chum salmon is allowed in that portion of Subdistrict 4-A from Stink Creek upstream to Cone Point during open subsistence fishing periods.

Koyukuk River: Subsistence salmon fishing in the Koyukuk River is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 5-D: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the downstream mouth of Wood River): This area includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana. Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days a week.

Subdistricts 6-C (from the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River): This area includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha. Personal use salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fish wheels may not be operated and gillnets with a mesh size greater than four inches and a length greater than 60 feet must be removed from the water.

Recorded fishery announcements and updates are available 24 hours a day at (907) 949-1731 or 1-866-479-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the Fairbanks ADF&G office at (907) 459-7274.

This has been an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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